REDEFINING CREATIVITY IN THE INTELLIGENT AGE:

INSIGHTS FROM SAVIESA'S PANEL OF EXPERTS

With the transformative rise of generative AI, we are arguably living in a new intelligent age. This type of intelligence is unprecedented. How humans reorganise ourselves to better understand and collaborate with AI will come down to how well we understand how AI is built, how well we can map its impact onto current intellectual and cultural frameworks, and how well we truly understand ourselves. At its heart, the debate on the future of AI is in fact a debate on the future of humanity.

To prepare future generations for an AI-driven world, it is incumbent on today's generations to answer those questions. That understanding should be used to shape, amongst others, serious educational reform.

Saviesa, a new Think Tank, has a mission to support educational reform by addressing both the challenges and opportunities AI presents to learning and creativity. Bringing together a wide range of experts, from educators to artists, policy makers to academics, to technology and business leaders, over panel discussions and more, Saviesa aims to build and sustain interdisciplinary debate on a complex topic. These debates are refined into suggested policies; action out of the abstract.

As part of Saviesa's launch, Founder Leonor Diaz Alcantara invited the following to debate, moderated by Peter Stojanovic, business and technology journalist, and Editor of HotTopics:

Karina Abramova: a UK-based creative practitioner exploring nature, technology, and environmental consciousness through guided walks, digital sculptures, and eco-somatic exercises. She speaks on Web3, climate action, and resilience

Success Yole Areeveso: a social entrepreneur and consultant with over two years of experience in social impact projects, focusing on education and skill acquisition. She is currently a café host with YouthxYouth, addressing education-related challenges. Passionate about education and media.

Dr. Carla Bonina: Associate Professor at Surrey Business School, academic, author, and advisor specializing in digital innovation, AI, and sustainable development. She advises governments and startups, focusing on data governance.

Professor Carl Gombrich: Dean and co-founder of the London Interdisciplinary School, advocating interdisciplinary education. A former UCL professor, he bridges mathematics, physics, philosophy, and the arts

Prajay Kamat: CTO and co-founder of MergeXR, specializing in extended reality technologies and virtual production. He holds a degree from the University of Bedfordshire

Devi Kolli: an extended reality (XR) pioneer and investor with 16+ years in digital transformation. She leads i3 Simulations, advancing intelligent, adaptive workplace training solutions across industries

Claire Koryczan: Founder and Director of Imagine Beyond, a consultancy integrating creativity, innovation, and people mastery to enhance entrepreneurial leadership and management. With over 25 years of experience, she collaborates with founders and leaders to foster high performance and productivity.

Marina Mesar (widely known by her artist's name, Oko): Croatia's leading female contemporary artist whose work spans paintings, murals, and installations. She has exhibited globally at prestigious venues, including the Museum of Contemporary Art in Zagreb**,** London's Victoria and Albert Museum**,** e-flux in New York, and the European Parliament in Brussels. Her mural *Equilibrium* is part of the Central European Bank's permanent collection, and *Don't Follow the White Rabbit* is displayed at Zagreb's Museum of Contemporary Art

Marine Tanguy: founder of MTArt Agency, a leading talent agency for visual artists. A passionate advocate for artists. She has delivered TEDx Talks, authored *Visual Detox*, and won Forbes 30 Under 30

Lisa Tse: London-based creative artist, serial entrepreneur, and photographer known for her innovative vision. She has founded multiple businesses, blending creativity with business strategy. Passionate about storytelling, she works across design, branding, and visual arts to create impactful experiences

The Nature of Creativity in the Age of AI

At its core, creativity allows humans to problem-solve, imagine the impossible and bring new ideas to life. Up until very recently this was considered hallowed ground for *homo sapiens*, separating us even from a product of our own creativity: the machine.

Today, the journey from machine to AI, and the rise of generative AI, has achieved much. Yet beyond its output, beyond its automation and potential for productivity, its novel ability to create is blurring the lines of what it means to be creative. That is, can we intrinsically differentiate human and non-human creativity, and whether we can or cannot, what does that mean for how we learn and live alongside one another?

Marcus du Sautoy, author of *The Creativity Code*, suggests that AI-generated imagery most closely resembles "combinational" creativity—rearranging existing data into novel forms. However, the panel commented that this type of creativity lacks the emotional depth and originality rooted in lived experience compared to that of transformational creativity. The ideas generated by the fusing of experience and art, for example, is more than the sum of the combinational parts. Indeed, cutting-edge mathematical creativity, regarded by some as the most remarkable human creativity of all, seems unlikely to come from AI in its current form.

Interestingly in the case of art, there is historical precedence for this debate.

Marcel Duchamp's infamous porcelain urinal was submitted as art in early 20th-century New York. His challenge to the status quo offered an opportunity to redefine artistic boundaries and the creative flow. Considering AIs impact on art's fluid boundaries, the lived experiences of humans may be important because of its intentionality rather than its novelty. The active nature of drawing upon one's life, rather than the passive collection and combination of data, is a clue to defining creativity.

As one panellist noted, "Creativity is rooted in inspiration, which comes from our experiences, emotions, and impulses. AI cannot replicate the human [let's call it] soul—the spark that drives us to create."

AI as a Creative Tool

Rather than replacing human creativity, then, perhaps AI has the potential to enhance it.

The panel heard how generative AI can support divergent thinking by making unexpected connections between concepts, aiding scientists, statisticians, artists, designers and students in overcoming creative or reasoning blocks. This is particularly useful in early-stage idea development, where unconventional associations can lead to true innovation. The pharmaceutical industry is already benefiting from the speed and power of AI programmes, for example. Demis Hassabis and John Jumper from the team that developed AlphaFold won the Nobel Prize in Chemistry in 2024 for their work on “protein structure prediction”.

Certain panellists argued that for some young learners, AI can serve as an aid in exploring new artistic forms, or more generally, accelerating idea generation or pattern recognition. AI can also help overcome common creative constraints, such as "design fixation," where creators become stuck in existing paradigms, and "functional fixedness," where individuals struggle to see alternative uses for familiar objects.

A balance must be struck: AI should serve as an enabler, not a crutch, ensuring that human originality remains central to the creative process. In business this is known as keeping a “human in the loop”. A hybrid model, where AI assists with mechanical tasks while human creativity drives conceptual breakthroughs, could be a more sustainable approach.

Are AI tools democratising creativity? Across the industry, new tools are making high-quality design, music composition and storytelling more accessible to those without formal training. However, this raises concerns about the dilution of traditional skills, such as drawing or writing, and the risk of reduced cognitive engagement in creative endeavors.

This latter point was raised as a considerable concern for educators. The relationship between raised levels of AI use and cognitive decline, particularly within the important age range of 3 - 5 years, requires further analysis, given it is a new phenomenon. Comparative studies in adults for attention spans, dopamine addiction and depression offer sobering hints. The panel was unanimous in its concern for the over-use of AI (and technology more broadly) in children and adolescents.

The Risks of AI Homogenisation and Bias

One of the most pressing concerns is the potential homogenisation of creative output. AI systems are trained on vast datasets that often reflect societal biases—and can be unethically or illegally gained. Without intervention, AI-generated content risks reinforcing stereotypes and limiting diversity in creative expression.

Marine Tanguy warned about "the cognitive cost of convenience"—the idea that reliance on AI-generated visuals can lead to passive consumption and a diminished ability to engage with complex artistic ideas. This phenomenon is particularly evident in social media platforms, where algorithmically generated images create a uniform aesthetic that stifles unique visual expression.

There are darker turns. The Saviesa panelists also pointed to AI-generated imagery favoring certain beauty standards and gender representations, even when explicitly prompted for diversity. Some audience members voiced strong concerns of models curtailing language and perspectives, creating a technological parameter to modern day misogyny and discrimination. The challenge is ensuring that AI models incorporate a broader spectrum of cultural and individual perspectives, even as the majority are created in just two locations: Silicon Valley and mainland China.

To mitigate these risks, AI developers must prioritise diverse datasets and ethical AI training. Techniques like data rebalancing can help reduce biases, ensuring that AI-generated content reflects a wider range of human experiences. Not all panellists thought this achievable, however, instead advocating to educate people to

constantly search and interrogate their own biases. There is, then, an important role for policy and civil society. Governments should commit resources to investing in data processing capacity in local and indigenous languages, ideally working in partnership with NGOs who have deep ties to these communities.

The Role of AI in Education and the Arts

When we think of creativity, many think first to art. Of course, the spectrum of human creativity covers far more: architecture, mathematics, fashion, poetry, product design and conservation, to name a few. Yet the lessons taken from one can still be applied, or used to inspire, elsewhere. Given education is the foundation for all creative outputs, it is important to ground these complex, abstract and philosophical discussions on AI into real-world action.

The panel discussed how AI-powered tools offer personalised learning experiences, helping students grasp complex concepts or refine their writing. Quite apart from the aforementioned cognitive impairment of the over-use of AI, panelists also expressed concern about the unintended consequences of automation in learning. Generative AI tools like ChatGPT can produce essays, solve problems and generate artwork, but they also risk stifling independent thinking—and so far these artworks are produced by 'stealing' original artworks. If students rely too heavily on AI, they may struggle to develop essential analytical and creative skills at the right time. This is seen as an “outsourcing” of creativity and critical thinking.

This strikes at the heart of the debate. Humans need to *collaborate* with AI in order for human creativity to be preserved where necessary and augmented where desired. Given the socio-cultural landscape of today, at play with the political and economic dynamics of a disjointed world, certain steps need to be taken to have this as the educator’s north star. These steps, or policy recommendations, can be found below:

Recommendations for AI Policy and Regulation

Based on the panel debate, the proposed key policy recommendations are as follows:

1. Integrate AI literacy and AI visual literacy in education: Teach students how to use AI responsibly while fostering independent thinking.
2. Develop robust AI regulations: Address issues like bias, copyright infringement, and deepfake misuse through clear legal frameworks.
3. Incentivise and fund diverse datasets: Encourage collaboration with underrepresented communities to ensure AI-generated content reflects a broad range of perspectives.
4. Support ethical innovation: Fund research into AI applications that augment, rather than replace, human creativity.
5. Bridge the digital divide: Expand access to AI tools in underserved areas to prevent widening socioeconomic disparities.
6. Protect intellectual property: Ensure that creators are fairly compensated when their work is used to train AI models.
7. Raise public awareness: Educate citizens about AI’s capabilities and limitations to foster informed discussions; specifically, to recognise that AI does not prioritise relationships and that this must continue to be at the forefront of human development.
8. Encourage human-AI collaboration: Promote AI as a tool that enhances rather than replaces human creativity.
9. Monitor and adjust policies: AI policies must be dynamic, adapting to new technological developments and emerging ethical concerns.*

**In countries like the UK, there are tax incentives for technical equipment. The same tax incentives could be put forward for hiring creatives within an organisation to reduce state aid and improve mental health at large.*

Closing thoughts

The Saviesa panel painted a nuanced and sometimes competing picture of AI's impact on creativity and society. While AI offers myriad opportunities to innovate and solve problems, it also presents risks that must be carefully managed. The challenge is to embrace AI thoughtfully—leveraging its capabilities while safeguarding the uniquely human traits that drive progress—in an economy that prioritises speed, disruption and iconoclasm.

By enacting ethical policies and encouraging responsible AI development, a significant part of society can ensure that AI serves as a creative collaborator, not a substitute or slave. The goal is to use AI to amplify human creativity rather than diminish it, fostering a future where technology and human ingenuity coexist harmoniously, and human education becomes a foundation for that future.

Peter Stojanovic,
Editor, HotTopics

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